

Witnessing where we are

Bible Passages

'In your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be ready to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give a reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behaviour in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.' 1 Peter 3.15,16

'Pray for us, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ ... Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way in which you act towards outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.' Colossians 4.2-6

'I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.' Philemon 6

Discuss the following question. **'Why do we all find it so difficult to share our faith?** What are the reasons/excuses that we make for not talking about Jesus when the opportunity arises.

My personal experience

There are twelve different forms of evangelism that I could list, but none of them are really effective unless Christians on the ground begin to be active in sharing their faith. The best way to PREACH the good news about Jesus, is to **knock off the letter 'P' and you are left with** the word REACH, then knock off the **letter 'R' and you are left with** the word EACH. The best way to share the good news of Jesus is for 'each one to reach one.'

Research on what brings people to church and faith in Jesus

3% church outreach events
3% personal needs
3% church publicity
6% Sunday School activities
8% Contact with church visitors
77% Invitation from a Christian friend
The personal touch made all the difference.

40 cases of healing in the NT 6 came on their own initiative, 34 were brought by friends. This means, that 85% were healed by Jesus, as a result of the concern of friends who told them about His healing power.

Billy Graham missions Their surveys revealed that over 85% of the enquirers that came forward at the end of the meeting were brought by Christian friends, who had prayed for them and personally invited them. Billy always defended what critics called mass evangelism, by saying it was personal evangelism on a large scale.

Compare the growth of the early church in Antioch, (Acts 11) and the church in China. The Christians were anonymous, courageous, spontaneous and effective. (*'A great number of people turned to the Lord.'* Verse 21)

Getting started in sharing our faith.

1. ***'In your hearts set apart Christ as Lord.'* 1Pet 3.15**
2. Learn to deal with fear ***'Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened.'***
1 Peter 3.14 ***'For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and self discipline.'*** *2 Timothy 1.7*
3. ***'Seek the filling of God's Spirit'*** **Acts 1.8** ***'You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be my witnesses.'***
'They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly'
Acts 4.31
4. Pray for opportunities.
'Always be ready to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.' *1 Peter 3.15f*
5. **Listen to people's conversations.** Questions help more than answers!
6. Treat people with respect ***'Do this with gentleness and respect.'*** *1 Peter 3.16* Be wise in your actions and gracious in your attitudes.
7. Be consistent in your daily Christian life ***'Make sure your everyday life is worthy of the gospel of Christ.'*** *Philippians 1.27*
8. Be convinced about what you believe ***'Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.'*** *1 Peter 3.15.*
9. Always carry literature with your name and address attached.
10. Have an appropriate answer ready for difficult questions. Be ready to share your story. "Would you like to know how I became a Christian?"

